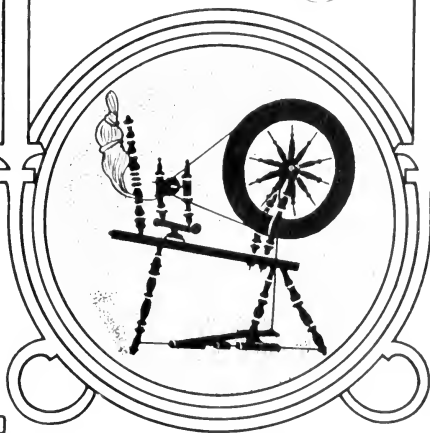


The DAYS of LONG AGO

Warren E. Comstock

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
Will E. Livezey







"HALLOWE'EN"

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO

AND

IMMORTALITY

(Antithesis of "The Rubaiyat")

BY

WARREN E. COMSTOCK

Author of "The First Woman and Other Poems"

ILLUSTRATED BY

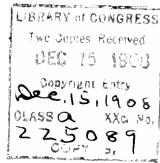
WILL E. LIVEZEY

RICHARD G. BADGER

The Gorham Press

BOSTON

1909



*TO THE REVERED MEMORY OF MY
DEAR MOTHER, I LOVINGLY
DEDICATE THIS LITTLE
VOLUME OF VERSE*

The Author





THE DAYS OF LONG AGO

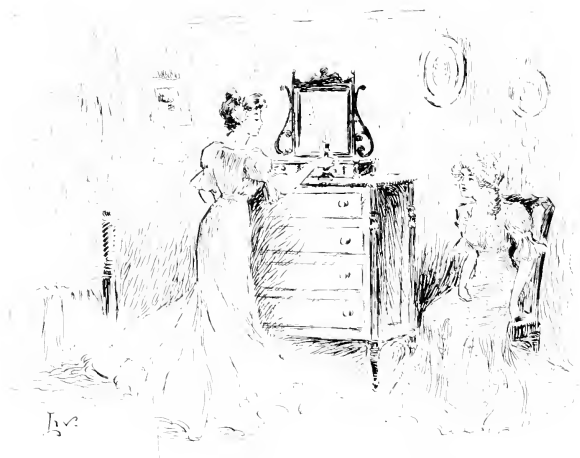
As we ascend the Mount of Life,
And pause upon the Great Divide;
And gaze back through the din and strife,
Though brave our hearts, we cannot hide
The welling tears of fond regret
For the Days of Long Ago.



The carpet-loom and spinning-wheel's
Soft droning music we can hear.
The fireplace glow we still can feel;
The well-sweep creaks upon our ear.
The old log-house — we see it yet —
In the Days of Long Ago.



The quaint rush-bottomed rocking-chair,
The bright rag carpet on the floor;
And grandma in her white cap there,
Knitting before the open door
With twinkling needles, beckon us
To the Days of Long Ago.



The tallow dips in sticks of brass,
With flaring flame again we see
The bureau with its knobs of glass,
And four-post bed with canopy.
In feathers deep how sound we sleep
In the Days of Long Ago.



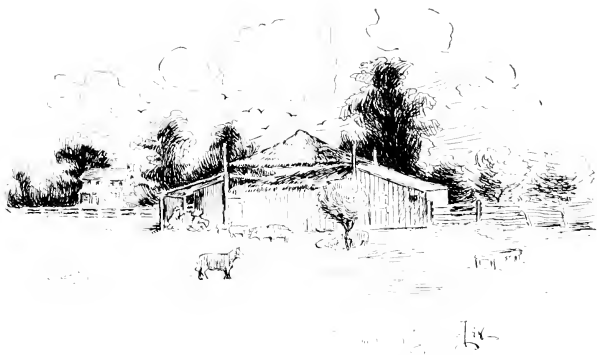
We churned the golden butter well;
We rolled the balls of cottage cheese.
The home-made cider cast a spell —
With clover blossom laden breeze —
And sweet content with duty blent
In the Days of Long Ago.



The old iron kettle in the glow
Of the great wood fire's licking flame.
How well it boiled the lye you know,
And made the soft soap, grandma's fame,
And first prize at the County Fair,
In the Days of Long Ago.



The sturdy farmer in the wheat,
 With cradle lays the harvest low,
The tread-mill grinds the sorghum, sweet,
 The hired man drives the ox-team slow,
O husking bees! O quilting teas!
 In the Days of Long Ago.



The shearing of the bleating sheep;
The plucking of the noisy geese.
The beehives hid in shadows deep;
The buckwheat blossoms' snowy fleece —
All wraiths of youth, who tell the truth
Of the Days of Long Ago.



The smokehouse filled — hog-killing time
With hams and "sides" hung in a row,
The blackbirds piping merry rhyme
With cawing of the pirate crow,
The lost chords of an ancient lay
Of the Days of Long Ago.



Then moonlight winter nights agleam
With diamond dust of sparkling snow!
The bob-sleigh with its four-horse team;
Young folks 'mid robes of buffalo,
How sly the kiss! How sweet the bliss!
Of the Days of Long Ago.



The dance is on!— Virginia Reel —
“ Gray Eagle ” screams from violin,
Exciting thrills from head to heel,
Quadrille and waltz the time fill in;
’Til break of day we dance away!
In the Days of Long Ago.



Then shady nooks — like elfin bowers —
The snowball and the lilac trees;
The beds of good old-fashioned flowers,
The honeysuckle-perfumed breeze --
Sweet incense hov'ring o'er the shrine
Of the Days of Long Ago.



The halo of the Golden Past
Grows brighter as the years roll by.
Fond retrospect in shadows cast
The scenes of yore on mem'ry's eye.
Dear ones we love have gone above
From the Days of Long Ago.



114

An echo from the Buried Past —
The great brass knocker on the door.
Its clanging call is stilled at last;
Those who responded are no more.
Their shades we see in memory
Of the Days of Long Ago.

IMMORTALITY

(Antithesis of “The Rubaiyat”)

I

“The flower that once has blown forever
Dies!”

Not so the soul of man, but to the
Skies,

Straightway it takes its flight!— ’less scripture
Lies.

II

This form of clay we wear is but the
Tent,

Pitched for a day on earth, and then we’re
Sent

To join the vast encampment, who are
Blent

III

With that great army who have gone
Before;

And now await us on the other
Shore.

We go but once, and we return no
More!

IV

Why do we hate to strike our tent, and
Be

Transported to the Land Beyond the
Sea,

Where all is bright and fair for you and
Me?

V

Because our faith is small. True friends are
Few!
We *know* this home, and that beyond the
Blue
Is unexplored by us, and if 'tis
True

VI

That we shall — disembodied spirits —
Dwell,
In never-ending bliss,— or else in
Hell,—
Be thrust to everlasting torments —
Well,

VII

Our mortal flesh dictates to us to
 Stay,
Where we are masters of our own sweet
 Way,
And make the bed ourselves, on which we
 Lay.

VIII

Life's drama is a play where all take
 Part.
The Timid Soul, and he of Lion
 Heart.
Faith, Hope, and Love, the factors of the
 Art.

IX

We cannot all be stars upon this
Stage.
Some minor part, for most of us doth
Gage
Our calibre, in this most strenuous
Age!

X

That we shall live again we cannot
Doubt.
Our innate longings put our fears to
Rout.
In Doubter's face the flag of Faith we
Flout!

XI

Both dainty flower and giant tree
 Proclaim:
“ The Hand that fashioned us is just the
 Same
That stretched the heavens, and called the
 stars by Name.”

XII

The very dust that rides upon the
 Blast
May once have been a Prophet of the
 Past,
The moves upon Life's checkerboard are
 Fast!

XIII

To-day the world seems bright with joy
 Ahead!
To-morrow finds us numbered with the
 Dead.
The hungry maw of Time by all is
 Fed.

XIV

In wailing of the wind — so sad and
 Drear —
The spirits of the Dead methinks I
 Hear.
The world of Yesterday, on Mem'ry's
 Bier.

XV

Mysterious is the veil that hides from
View
The myriad throngs who've passed, and still
pass Through:
Compared with these those now on Earth are
Few.

XVI

We try to look beyond, to pierce the
Veil.
In storm-tossed bark we bravely set our
Sail.
If Faith be at the helm we'll ride the
Gale.

XVII

The Styx - which separates those There and
Here,—
Forever sounds within our timid
Ear.
Its swift, dark tide, filling our heart with
Fear!

XVIII

We of to-day shall long forgotten
Be,
Our tiny sail sunk in oblivion's
Sea!
Unless, dear Lord, we've anchored safe with
Thee.

XIX

Fairest picture by mortal ever
 Seen:—
When sinking sun frescoes with golden
 Sheen
The fleecy clouds that hide the Evening
 Queen.

XX

The sun's last quiv'ring darts rise
 Higher.—
Until the mountain top and lofty
 Spire
Reflect the dying embers of its
 Fire!

XXI

Nature's own artist dips her magic

Brush

In pigments rare, made in the quiet

Hush,

When dying Day welcomes the onward

Rush

XXII

Of myriad twinkling stars. Like diamonds

Rare,

They gleam as gems entwined in raven

Hair!

Then shafts of silver moonbeams pierce the

Air'

XXIII

Sweet notes of birds and perfume of the
 Flowers
Shall ravish hearts who love them, — but not
 Ours, —
Our thrill! The joy of the Celestial
 Bowers!

XXIV

The harmonies of earth shall help to
 Fire
The hearts of those we leave when we
 Retire
To join the chorus of the Heavenly
 Choir.

XXV

Now Luna fair shall wax and wane, and
 So
The sun for years shall rise and set and
 Lo!
Unnumbered generations come and
 Go!

XXVI

The ebb and flow of tides shall still go
 On.
Dame Nature clothe herself in green, then
 Don
Her fleecy robes of white, but we'll not
 Con

XXVII

These object lessons from the Book of
Life,
Midst company of Seraphim, where
Strife
Has long since ceased, and nought but Love
is Rife;

XXVIII

We'll dwell throughout Eternity, and
Wait
For other Pilgrims who have traveled
Straight
The Narrow Path that leads to Heaven's
Gate!

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